



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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TREASURER ANGELIDES APPLAUDS LEGISLATURE'S PASSAGE OF BILL TO ALLOW FUEL-EFFICIENT HYBRID VEHICLES INTO CARPOOL LANES

Assembly Bill 2628, Sponsored by Angelides, Now Goes to Governor's Desk For Signature

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Legislature gave its final approval late Thursday to a bill sponsored by State Treasurer Phil Angelides that would open the State's carpool lanes to fuel-efficient hybrid and other advanced-technology vehicles. Angelides and the author of the bill, Assemblymember Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), say the legislation would help clear California's air, boost the State's energy independence and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The legislation now heads to Governor Schwarzenegger's desk for his expected signature. The bill is also sponsored by the California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

"The Legislature's action today sends an important signal, encouraging the automotive industry to produce fuel-efficient vehicles that will help clear the air, reduce our dependence on polluting fuels and save motorists dollars," Angelides said. "This effort to open up the State's carpool lanes to hybrid and other advanced-technology vehicles comes at an especially important time, as gasoline prices are volatile and the need is growing to encourage clean and environmentally sound technologies."

AB 2628 would allow hybrid and other advanced-technology vehicles that meet tough emissions and fuel efficiency standards (45 miles per gallon or greater efficiency) access to California's high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, or carpool lanes, regardless of the number of people in the vehicle. The legislation would take full advantage of the available capacity in the State's HOV lanes while encouraging California motorists to use less fuel. Under the legislation, the hybrid vehicles that would be eligible today for HOV access would include the Honda Insight, Honda Civic Hybrid and Toyota Prius. As new hybrid and other advanced-technology vehicles are developed, they too will become eligible for HOV access if they meet the strictest emissions and fuel efficiency standards.

The state legislation would take effect only after the federal government acts to approve the use of HOV lanes by hybrid vehicles. Federal authorizing legislation is now included in the pending surface transportation funding bill. (Federal approval is required because federal funds are used in the construction of HOV lanes.)

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